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THE MOTHERS' COMPANION

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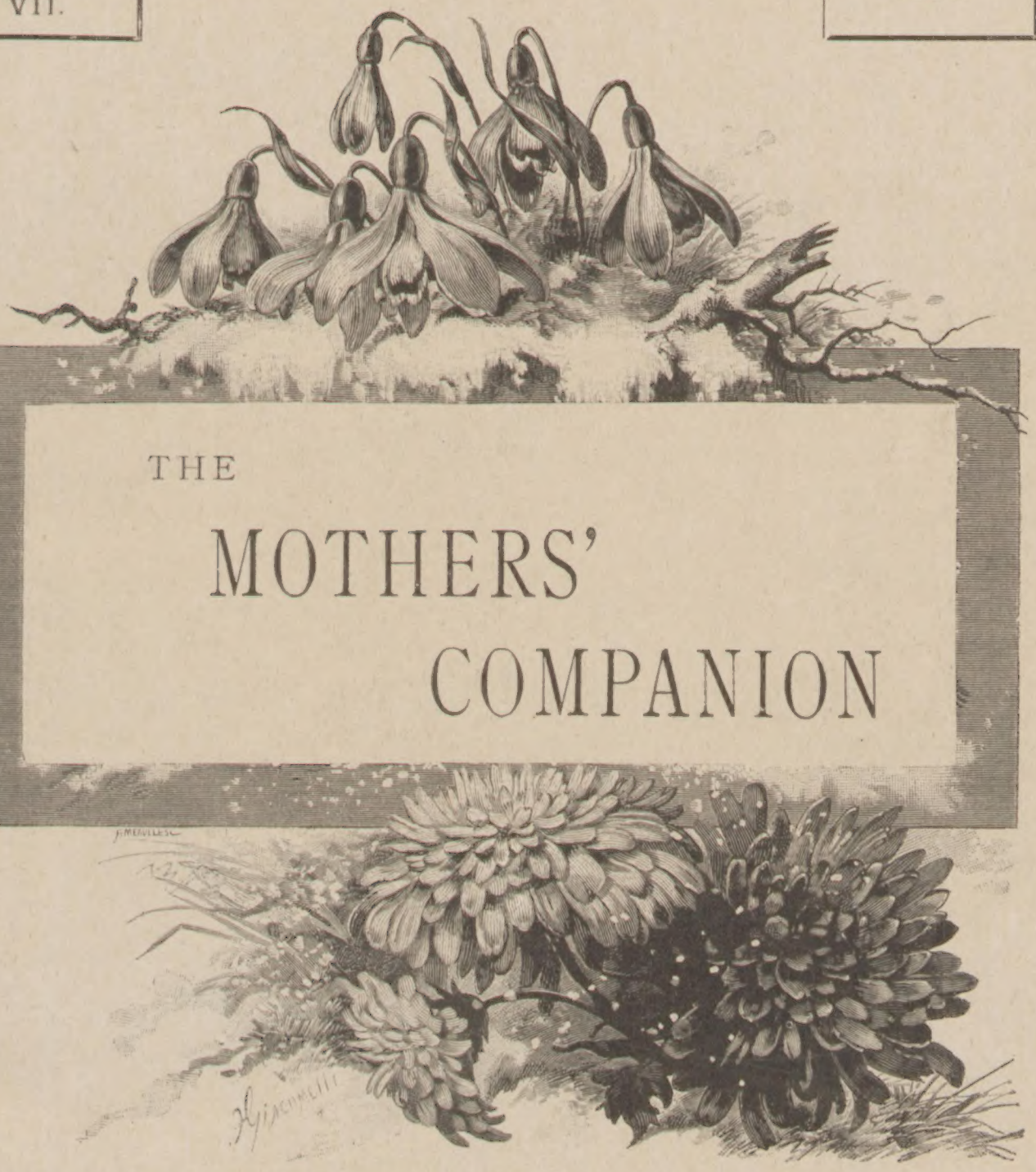

THE MOTHERS' COMPANION

Nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
—*Milton.*

London S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO. 9 PATERNOSTER ROW

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ETHEL'S EXPECTATIONS; OR, A MOTHER'S MISTAKE.

BY EMMA LESLIE,

Author of "Bolingbroke's Folly," "Gerald's Dilemma," etc., etc.

"What would you think if you heard I was an heiress?" *p. 2.*

CHAPTER I.

LEAVING THE OLD HOME.

"NINE, ten, eleven—there are only eleven custard glasses here, Ethel, and I know there were twelve just before papa was taken ill," and the speaker, a girl of seventeen, paused and sighed as she looked towards the table where her sister was making out a list of the contents of the china-closet.

"Were they used during papa's illness?" asked the elder sister, looking up from her list to try and remember something of the missing glass.

"I hardly know what was used. I am afraid it must have been broken."

"How tiresome, to be sure! for that will spoil the set, and these people who have bought papa's practice particularly said they would buy only perfect sets of the things we might want to sell."

"And we are not very likely to want custard glasses at the cottage," said her sister.

"No, indeed we shan't, Dorothy; for mamma's small annuity will barely keep us, I am afraid, so that the price of even a set of custard glasses has to be considered now. There, I will leave it open for those to be added, and we will go on to the next. How many tumblers?"

"Two dozen, and two dozen——"

"My dear Ethel, old Mr. Sutherland has just come in, and Mr. Satchell's people have come to look over the house; I wish you would go down to the drawing-room and talk to the old gentleman."

"Oh dear, mamma, I really can't; let Dorothy go and amuse him, if he must be amused. Tiresome old thing to come at such a busy time as this! I shall let him know it, if I have to go down to him," she threatened, as her mother replaced the list she had picked up.

"No, no, Ethel; you must do no such thing. You must just leave Dorothy to finish this list as well as she can, while you go and entertain Mr. Sutherland. Run to your room, dear, before you go down, and make your hair tidy; you know how particular he is as to a lady always looking neat and nice, and—and you know you were always a favourite of Mr. Sutherland's," said Mrs. Maldon.

Ethel looked up quickly as she laid aside her pen, and followed her mother to her own room.

"Mother, is there any special reason why I should humour this old fidget?" she asked.

"Yes, there is a very particular reason, and one you ought to know perhaps, though your father told me not to

disclose the secret unless I thought it was needful. He told me himself only a week before he died. Shut the door, dear, and brush your hair at my glass, while I change my cap and tell you what Mr. Pratt, the lawyer, told dear papa. Of course, you know that he and Mr. Sutherland knew each other a great many years—in fact, he was almost his only friend; so that it is not so strange after all, perhaps, that Mr. Sutherland should choose one of papa's children to inherit his wealth by-and-by."

"Mamma!" exclaimed Ethel, dropping the hairbrush in her astonishment. "I thought I had heard that Mr. Sutherland had a nephew or cousin somewhere," she said the next minute.

"Yes, somewhere; but he has not heard of him for years and years, and so the old man is practically alone in the world, and therefore has chosen to make you his heiress."

"And I shall really be a rich woman—a rich lady—some day?" said the girl slowly, but with a flush of delight.

"Well, Mr. Sutherland has made his will in your favour, it seems; so I hope you will do nothing to offend the old gentleman, who must be very fond of you, of course. Come, come, be quick and go down to him," said Mrs. Maldon, as she adjusted her widow's cap; for Ethel had sunk down in a chair, and seemed lost in the delightful prospect her mother's news had suddenly opened before her.

She sprang up, and set about making herself more fit to receive company, though her thoughts were fully occupied, as her mother could see, by the news just made known to her.

"You must not forget that this is a secret, Ethel. I am not sure that Mr. Pratt ought to have told even your dear papa, and so you must be very careful to say nothing of what I have told you to Mr. Sutherland himself, for he is very odd, you know, and might feel so offended about it as to alter it, and spoil all your hopes."

"I will be careful, mamma, never fear," answered Ethel, and she was ready to go down and entertain their guest now with great pleasure.

He stayed above an hour, and the list of the contents of the china-closet was completed before Ethel returned to her sister.

"I have hunted everywhere for that custard glass, but I cannot find it," said Dorothy, when her sister went back to her.

"Never mind, dear; it doesn't matter much," answered Ethel, in such a preoccupied tone that Dorothy saw at once that something must have happened.

"Have you heard any news in the drawing-room?" she asked.

"In the drawing-room? Mr. Sutherland was in the drawing-room."

"Yes, yes, mamma told us that; but he is nobody. What have the people said about the house, and the dining-room furniture? Are they going to buy it, and all the rest of the things?"

"How impatient you are to get rid of our possessions, Dorothy! For myself, I hope they won't buy them. I should think we might keep them for ourselves."

"Keep them? Where could we put them in the cottage?" said Dorothy, in a tone of astonishment.

"Oh, there are cupboards there as well as here," laughed Ethel. "And I should not wonder if we did not have to move at all," she added.

"Why, what makes you think that? I am sure something must have happened. Has mamma heard from her long-lost uncle, who went to Australia and got rich so many years ago?" asked Dorothy.

But her sister, though she shook her head, seemed to invite further questioning, and so Dorothy was not slow to press her to tell what she had heard, for it appeared certain that some momentous news must have arrived to account for the change in Ethel's hopes and opinions.

"Can you keep a secret, Dorothy?" asked her sister at last.

"Of course I can. But if it is anything mamma does not wish me to know just now—why, I would rather not hear it until she herself thinks it right to tell me," added Dorothy.

"Oh, this is my secret quite as much as mamma's, though she has only just told me about it. I wish she had told me before those people had taken the house—if they have taken it," added Ethel.

"But you have been hoping and praying that they would take it, because, as you said, it would lift such a load of anxiety from mamma's mind to have this large, expensive house taken off her hands, especially as her own cottage happens to be empty just now."

"Yes, yes; but that was before I knew the secret. Dollie, what would you think if you heard I was an heiress?"

"Why, of course I should be very glad; but if mamma has not heard about that uncle, I don't see how you can be, we have no other rich relations," answered Dorothy.

"But papa had a rich friend. Old Mr. Sutherland owns a great deal of property in the town, besides the old Manor House where he lives, and two or three of the farms round it—and I am Mr. Sutherland's heiress!" and as she spoke Ethel drew herself up, and something like a feeling of pity for her less fortunate sister stole over her amid the exultation that she felt in making this announcement. "Of course, if I am a rich lady it will make a great deal of difference to you and mamma," she hastened to add; "and that is why I hope those people have not taken the house and agreed to buy the furniture."

"Oh, but it would not do to count our chickens before they are hatched," said Dorothy. "And I do not understand quite what you mean about being an heiress. Does Mr. Sutherland want you to have some of his money now? I have heard papa say he was very rich, but also very mean—too mean to pay papa as a stranger would do."

"Ah, but don't you see how that was? He intended to pay him over and over again by leaving his property to me," interrupted Ethel.

"Well, dear, of course I am very glad for your sake that he is going to do this; but he is so odd in his ways, that I don't think mamma will care to keep this house on her hands just for that. Does Mr. Sutherland wish her to do so?" asked her sister.

"He did not say so directly, but he spoke so very kindly about dear papa, and how many pleasant hours he had spent in this house, that I feel sure he does not wish us to leave it; but, of course, he could not dictate to mamma what she should do now."

Ethel might have added that she had said a great deal about the pain it was to her mother to leave their comfortable home for a tiny cottage outside the town, where they would be away from all their neighbours and friends. This had been enlarged upon in the hope that the old gentleman would make some proposal about the wealth she was to inherit by-and-by; for if she was to be a great lady, and live at the Manor House in a few years' time, surely he

would like her to live in a more becoming style than they could in that tiny cottage of six rooms. But although she had said so much about its inconveniences, and how seldom they would be able to see old friends when once they had removed, the only practical result of this talk had been that he suggested she should come to an occasional dinner-party at the Manor House—a form of entertainment that Ethel cordially disliked.

"He wishes me to go to the Manor House very often," she said, after a pause.

"You will have a long walk from the cottage," remarked her sister.

"Of course I shall, and that is why I think Mr. Sutherland wishes us to stay here."

"I feel sure mamma will not care to do that," said Dorothy, "and I am sure I should prefer living at the cottage to being dependent upon Mr. Sutherland," she added quickly.

"How foolishly you talk, Dorothy! We should not be dependent, as you call it. Mamma's income would keep us here as well as at the cottage. The only difference would be the rent. We should soon let the cottage, and that would partly pay the rent of this house; and if Mr. Sutherland should wish to make me a suitable allowance, we could stay on here without any difficulty. So that I hope mamma will not be in a hurry to settle everything with Mr. Satchell at once."

"But there is papa's practice," said Dorothy, when she could recover sufficiently from her astonishment to speak.

"Oh, yes, of course that is practically settled; but the house is another matter, and I hope you will leave me to speak to mamma about this. You must remember, Dorothy, that you are not to speak a word of what I have told you, even to mamma. It is to be a close secret for the present, for mamma might be vexed if she knew I had told you about it."

So Dorothy promised to be careful what she said, and leave all the management of affairs to her sister without seeking to influence her mother in any arrangement that she might propose as to their future plans.

"And you must not breathe a word to Tom, for if you do he will be crazy to become a doctor, and we never could afford that."

"Then your fortune won't be of any service to us," said Dorothy, in a changed tone. "Only our brother could really profit by it, and if he is not to be helped to attain his heart's desire, I am sure I shall never want a farthing of it."

"Now, Dollie, don't be silly. Tom will do very well with Mason and Hall. Mr. Mason has promised to look after him and help him on in the business, and to be a chemist is the next best thing to being a doctor; and with that he will have to be content."

"Of course he will, like a sensible lad as he is. It was you rather than Tom I was thinking of when I spoke; for if you are not to have the pleasure of helping Tom in the only way that he can be helped, I don't see what happiness you are going to get out of your money, any more than Mr. Sutherland does now—and——"

"Hush! here comes mamma," said Ethel, hastily.

She was not sorry for the interruption, and rose to open the door for her mother.

"Have those tiresome people gone at last?" she asked quickly.

"Is the business settled, mamma?" questioned Dorothy.

"Yes, dear, almost. We must hurry the men on with the repairs at the cottage, for Mr. Satchell wants to come into this house by the end of the month."

"But you did not agree to that, did you, mamma?" asked her elder daughter, in some alarm.

"My dear, I was glad to do it; for the sooner we can lessen our expenses the better. We must remember that with only a hundred pounds a year, even with no rent to pay, we shall have to be very careful, and we must look at every shilling before we spend it."

"But, mamma, why should we do this—sink into mere nobodies in that little cottage, when by-and-by I shall be a county lady? I am sure Mr. Sutherland will not like that?"

"Has he said anything about it?" asked Mrs. Maldon quickly, for she was very anxious now that her daughter should not miss this grand future, which, after all, depended upon the whim of an eccentric old man. "What did he say to you, Ethel?"

Dorothy had left the room, so that they were at liberty to talk of the secret that had come into their possession.

"He did not say in actual words that he did not like the idea of our leaving this house, but I could see he felt it very much. He told me I must go to the Manor oftener in future—and of course, mamma, it will be my duty to do that, and try to cheer him all I can. And that is why it would be so much better for us to stay here and make as little change as possible. Of course, we should have to give up the carriage, and hire one when I went to a dinner-party anywhere; but——"

"My dear child, pray don't let your head run on dinner-parties and carriages, for I tell you it is quite impossible to think of such things. As I explained to you and Dorothy last week, we must learn to be happy and content with small means for the future; and you both agreed with me that we still might be a happy, united family, though we did live in a small cottage where we had to do most of the housework ourselves."

"Yes, mamma, and I daresay I could have learned to cook and iron and do the light work of the garden, if there was nothing but that to expect all my life; but now things are altered, and I must prepare to become a lady of some consequence, and how can I do that in a pokey little cottage?"

"You called it a cosy little nest when we went to look at it," said her mother reproachfully.

"Yes, and of course we would have made it as comfortable as possible. I remember how Dorothy and I talked over it every night after we went to bed, until we almost longed for the time when we might begin. But you see everything is altered now, and I am sure we ought to stay here, or at least not to be in such a hurry to move."

"But why should you wish us to do that, just because there is the possibility of your becoming a wealthy woman by-and-by? Mr. Sutherland may live for years and years, and you ought to know from all we have heard about him that he is not likely to part with any of his money until he is compelled to do so."

"But you have not given him time to think of what he would like to do," insisted Ethel. "Of course he would like to turn things over in his mind before he speaks, and I feel sure if you would just wait a week or two, mamma, we should hear from him about it."

But Mrs. Maldon shook her head and smiled rather grimly. "I know our friend too well to expect anything of that sort," she said. "He was fond of dear papa, I believe, and not without reason, for your father saved his

life more than once, so that what he intends to do for you, seeing that he has no near relatives, is not so very wonderful after all; and as you are your papa's daughter and something like him, I daresay he will wish you to go to the Manor House sometimes; but there the matter will end, you may be sure."

"But I am not so sure, mamma," replied Ethel. "It seems just the most natural thing in the world to me, that having made up his mind who shall have his money and property by-and-by, he should spend a little of it now in making that person comfortable, and fit to take her proper place in the world."

"That is because you do not know Mr. Sutherland as well as I do; and I shall regret telling you what I did if you allow it to become the chief idea of your life. I thought I could trust you with the secret, that you might be civil and respectful to the old gentleman; but beyond this, I tell you it ought not to be allowed to make the slightest difference in your mode of life. Remember, it may be years and years before this wealth comes to you—if indeed it ever comes. Mr. Sutherland may even outlive you, and to be in a continual fret of anticipation would be to spoil your whole life, and make this prospective wealth a curse rather than a blessing. Now try, dear, and put it out of your mind as far as you can, and say nothing to Tom or Dorothy about it."

"I shouldn't think of telling Tom," replied Ethel in rather a sullen tone, for she had not anticipated that her mother would so firmly hold to her purpose of removing to the cottage.

But she comforted herself with the thought that there was still time, before the end of the month, for Mr. Sutherland to make suitable provision for her future; and she began to listen for every knock at the door, hoping the old man would call again and she should be sent for to the drawing-room, or her mother be asked to stay on where they had been living so many years.

But though numerous friends called, Mr. Sutherland did not repeat his visit. The days went on, and he made no sign.

The furniture that would be most useful in the smaller house was selected, and an inventory made of what her father's successor, Mr. Satchell, would take over; but Ethel took no further interest in these proceedings now, and frowned upon her sister for being so busy over the various details of the transfer.

Each morning she would ask, "Has the postman brought any letters for me?" Yet the one she waited and watched for seemed as though it would never come. But the very last morning of their stay in the old home the postman brought a letter for "Miss Maldon" bearing the well-known old-fashioned seal.

Without waiting to open it, Ethel ran up to her mother's room, waving it triumphantly at Dorothy, whom she passed on the stairs.

"At last, at last, mamma!" she exclaimed in intense excitement, as she entered and closed the door before opening her letter.

(Continued on page 17.)

FOR MOTHERS AND WIVES.

BY PHYLLIS BROWNE.

"THERE is nothing new under the sun," said the Wise Man, and amongst the old things which have to be faced and reckoned with by one generation after another, are the thousand and one difficulties and puzzling problems belonging to the upbringing of children, and the direction and management of the home. The difficulties and puzzles frequently disappear, however, when persons of experience have to deal with them—simply because these persons have, by trying to do well, failing, and trying again, become acquainted with expedients and methods of treatment exactly suited to the occasion. In the pages of the MOTHERS' COMPANION an attempt will be made to furnish a few practical suggestions of "what to do and how to do it" when probable contingencies actually arise.

CONCERNING THE BABY WHO DOES NOT SLEEP WELL.

What can be more disturbing to home comfort and the orderly management of the household than the possession of a baby who is not a good sleeper? We all know that when an infant sleeps he does well. Plenty of sleep is one of the things an infant must have if he is to thrive; and it is always a good sign when a young infant sleeps much, if only the sleep is natural and healthy. Yet there are babies who have plenty of loving attention bestowed upon them; whose mothers are most careful to put them to bed at a certain hour; to be sure that they are warm and comfortable; that requirements are supplied, and disturbing influences removed;—and yet they will not have a long sleep. At some unheard-of hour in the dead of night they persist in waking and being most lively, and then, as Mark Twain says, "Sufficient unto the day is one baby."

Mothers face to face with this trial are advised to make exhaustive inquiries and find out whether or not Master Baby gets a snatch of sleep late in the afternoon. Wakeful babies who object to sleep at proper times (and such babies have been found in the best-regulated nurseries) are very fond of getting a few minutes' nap in nurse's arms when no one is looking. Nurse is tired perhaps with her morning's work, and glad to have a little quiet. So she allows him to doze, and says nothing. But her easefulness means ruin to the night's sleep.

As soon as a child has attained to an age when the frequent sleeps of early infancy have given place to one nap a day, it is most desirable that the nap should be taken in the morning, say from eleven to one. If more than this is necessary, a sleep not later than two may be allowed. But young mothers should realise that if baby sleeps late in the afternoon, the chances are that the nights will be broken and disturbed.

Every mother knows also that when babies are very young and unable to turn from one side to the other without assistance, a sleep may often be prolonged by merely lifting the sleeper, and turning him to the other side, smoothing the pillow and soothing him.

The most effectual way of making a baby sleep long is to be particular to feed him regularly. For the first three or four months of life he should be fed once in the night if he wakes, but the earlier this practice can be discontinued the better. A healthy baby should go to rest for the night not later than six. At half-past nine or ten a full meal may be given to him, but after this, feeding should be postponed as long as possible. If the child is fed the first time he moves, he will get into the way of expecting food as often in the night as in the day; but if the intervals between the times of taking food are gradually lengthened, the child will form a habit of taking long sleeps. In the training of children it is to be remembered that habit is everything.

An Easy Method of Training Children to Stand Gracefully.

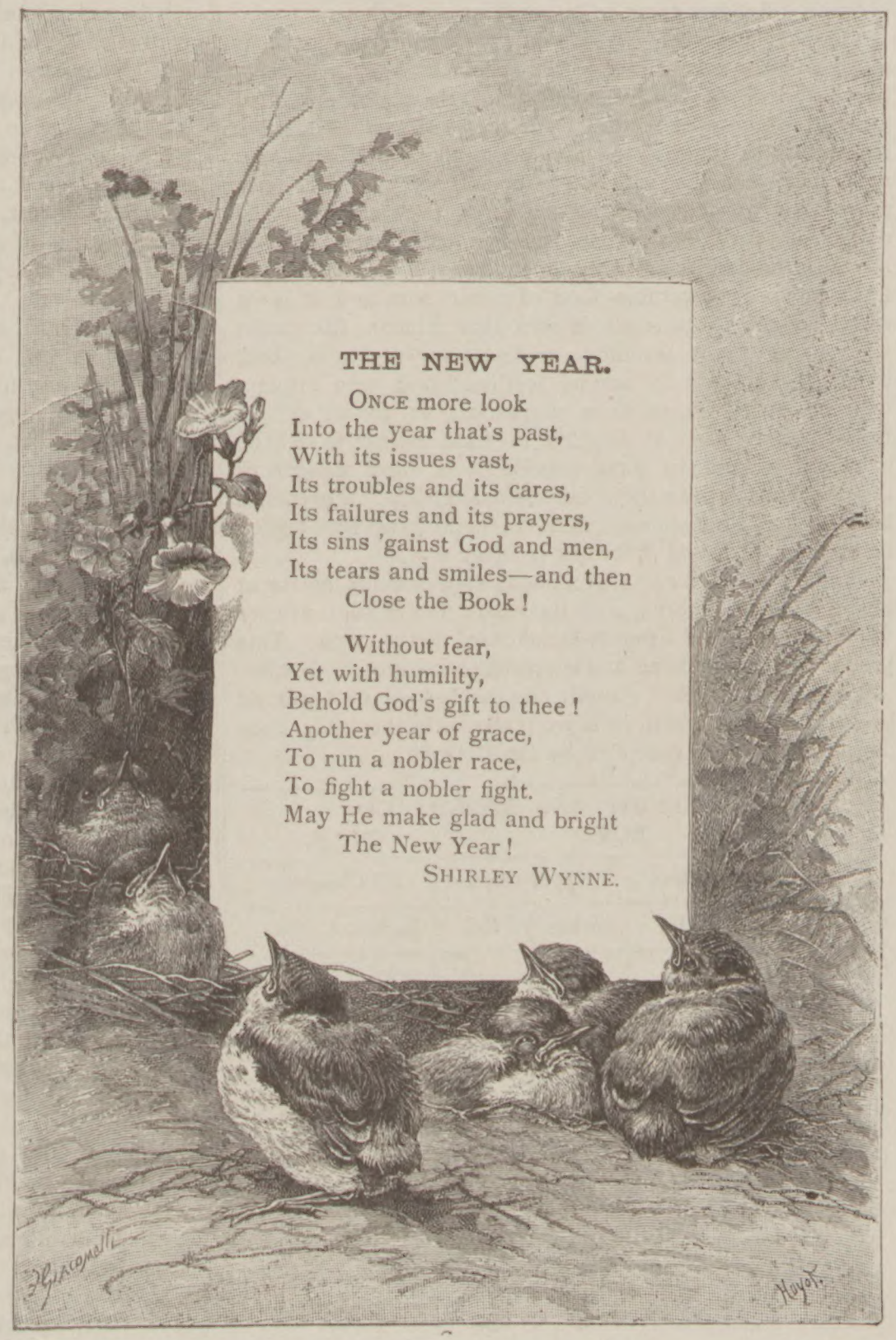
Mothers are often made unhappy through noticing that growing children hold themselves awkwardly. They stoop, or they poke their heads forward, or push up their shoulders; when reproved they alter their attitude for a minute, but speedily return to it. Awkwardness of this sort is sometimes the sign of curvature of the spine, and when there is any fear that mischief of this kind is going on, a medical expert should be consulted. When, however, it is merely a sign of laziness or forgetfulness, it may be easily conquered if the mother will adopt the following method:—Make it a rule, and conscientiously and perseveringly enforce it, that the children shall every day, before and after each meal, stand straight up with their backs to the door for one minute, making as nearly as possible while they do so the head, shoulders, elbows, hands, back, and heels touch the door. This will put the body in the correct position. It will throw the chest forward, keep the head back and shoulders down, and throw the weight of the body on the small of the back. If, having assumed this position, the children will try to maintain it as long as they can, they will very soon accustom themselves to stand correctly. But apart from any effort on their part, the mere practice of standing thus twice or thrice a day will be of great service.

Slow Eating.

The American philosopher Emerson once said that the sick man was on the road to being a rascal. Without going so far as this, we may yet acknowledge that indigestion is a usual cause of discontent and irritability. When food does not digest properly, either amongst children or grown-up people, it is scarcely likely that the sufferer will be amiable and kindly. There is little doubt, however, that incapacity to digest food is produced largely by the want of quiet, slow eating. Hungry folks and busy folks eat quickly, and so they do not give Nature a chance of doing her work. By all means let mothers encourage their children to eat slowly and deliberately. The power of life depends as much upon this detail as upon any other of the sort.

Recipe.

Soup for Daily Fare.—Housewives who have to arrange the meals for a family would often be glad if they could provide soup to "help out" the dinner. Yet they hesitate to order it because of the time and trouble involved in making it. Let them when thus circumstanced try Edwards' Desiccated Soups. These preparations are both cheap and convenient. They are at their best when stock made from bones or the liquor in which meat has been boiled is used in making them; and if root vegetables can be boiled in the stock, and rubbed through a sieve before the desiccated soup is added, the result will be very good.



THE NEW YEAR.

Once more look
Into the year that's past,
With its issues vast,
Its troubles and its cares,
Its failures and its prayers,
Its sins 'gainst God and men,
Its tears and smiles—and then
Close the Book!

Without fear,
Yet with humility,
Behold God's gift to thee!
Another year of grace,
To run a nobler race,
To fight a nobler fight.
May He make glad and bright
The New Year!

Shirley Wynne.

THE RISING GENERATION.

BY A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER.

WE are getting more and more alive to the fact that England's future is influenced to no small degree by the way we train our boys and girls. The care we bestow on them physically, mentally, and morally is a national service we render to our country, and the domestic life of England still is, and long may it continue to be, the pattern for the whole world. It is true that defects are easily pointed out. Nevertheless, taking it all round, we may safely assert that the domestic life and home training of England are essentially sound and good. The care of the mental and physical sides has come to be more evenly balanced.

One fact, however, we may at once emphasise, for it is a great blot upon our race. Three-fourths, or as some say, four-fifths of all deaths amongst infants under one year arise from improper feeding! It seems almost impossible sufficiently to impress the fact on mothers that milk, and milk alone, is the safe diet for infancy, and that once they begin to introduce patent foods they are taking a dangerous path, leading to disease and death. Nearly all these foods (bread being, of course, still worse) contain farinaceous or vegetable food of some sort, and it is, or rather ought to be, well known that human life under six months cannot assimilate or digest any vegetable food, babies being entirely animal feeders; and any attempt to prematurely make them vegetarians is almost certain to kill them. Even if they live they are subject to rickets, a common, and to girls especially, a most dangerous disease, leaving permanent defects in after-life. The bones become soft and spongy, and the child gets bow-legged or knock-kneed, and deformed in other ways.

Some parents have a great and superstitious horror of giving meat to children, with the result that as soon as ever the milk is dropped a purely farinaceous diet is given. This produces imperfect bone, and is a common cause of the disease.

The way in which growth can be helped or hindered by care and surroundings is well shown in this table, condensed from those compiled by Dr. Roberts :—

	HEIGHT AND WEIGHT OF BOYS.				GIRLS.	
	Working Class.		Upper Class.		All Classes.	
Years.	Inches.	lbs.	Inches.	lbs.	Inches.	lbs.
5	41	50	—	—	41	40
6	43	54	—	—	43½	44
7	45	57	—	—	45½	48
8	47	59	—	—	47½	52
9	49	62	—	—	49½	56
10	50½	66	53	67	51½	60
11	51½	70	54½	73	53½	66
12	53½	74	56½	80	56	76
13	55½	78	58½	88	58	88
14	58	84	61	98	60	96
15	60½	94	63½	110	61	104
16	63	106	66½	126	61½	110
17	64½	116	68	140	62	112
18	65½	122	68½	146	62	114
19	66	128	68¾	150	—	—
20	66½	132	69	152	—	—

The rule of healthy growth is that a child should gain 2 lbs. in weight for every inch in height between three and four feet, and 2½ lbs. for every inch between four and five feet. Any child more than 7 lbs. below the weight here given should be examined medically.

From this table we find that boys of the upper class, such as are brought up at the public schools and with the best of food and surroundings, average at least three inches taller and over a stone heavier than boys from the Board schools, who are early set to work at hard employments. Early manual labour stunts the growth, especially when combined with bad air and insufficient food. There is no place like the country for rearing the young, and there can be no doubt that people grow much taller in the country than in towns.

If a child passes five feet between ten and eleven, it will be tall; if between thirteen and fourteen, it will be of medium height; if not till fifteen, it will be short.

A dry climate is conducive to stoutness, and a damp climate to thinness.

With regard to the general health of children, all that hygiene can teach may be summed up under these five essentials—good air, good food, suitable clothing, sufficient exercise and rest, and cleanliness.

Good air is of great importance at night in the bedroom. This should always be ventilated by leaving the window partly open—the foolish prejudice against night air being a bad survival from the dark ages.

The food we have said a little about, at any rate in infant life. As to children, the great point is to give them an unlimited supply of wholesome, well-cooked food at regular intervals, avoiding too much sameness and eating between meals. We say "unlimited" because we do not think a parent can successfully gauge a child's wants, and we do not think that any child will come to harm through eating too much, providing that the food is wholesome and only eaten at meal-times. A child should not be pressed beyond a certain point to eat food it does not like, as the dislike is often more than mere caprice. When young, a child ought to have an hour's sleep in the middle of the day, for which it should be undressed. Children under ten need 11 hours' sleep, under thirteen 10½ hours, and under fifteen 9½ hours. This should be continued till twenty, after which 8 hours is enough. Children require most sleep in the holidays, because the body is more thoroughly tired out then, and we must remember that a tired body demands more sleep than a tired brain, which is often as well relieved by bodily exercise.

The springtime is the period when the most rapid growth takes place in children as well as in all nature. It is then that a child is most liable to disorders, particularly of the nervous system. Over-pressure at school is a frequent cause of these disorders. The symptoms of nerve trouble are generally undue movement and restlessness, headaches and sleeplessness. Nothing is more foolish and short-sighted than to neglect these warnings that Nature gives us, and all studies ought to be subservient to the child's bodily health.

Stimulants of all sorts are unneeded by, and most pernicious to children. They stunt the growth and produce a depraved taste. Bands of Hope and all other agencies for keeping children from touching alcohol and acquiring a taste for it should therefore be warmly encouraged.

A child should always be kept clean. It does not matter if his clothes are soiled, provided that his skin is spotless. A warm bath and plenty of soap several times a week is good, though a tepid sponge bath every morning is better. Children cannot, however, bear long exposure, as in the sea or a swimming bath, without injury.

With regard to exercise and rest, they are both essential to growth in a way that few people suspect. We have spoken of rest and sleep; now a word in reference to exercise may be said.

Every movement of the body being directed by the mind, develops not only the body in executing it, but the brain in causing it. Nothing is so good for growing nerve centres as movement, and particularly that form of movement against resistance that we call work. Every motion of leg, arm, eye, or tongue produces a double nerve current in brain and body, and if the body is intelligently exercised in every part it favours the growth of an active and useful brain more than anything else. The great thing is to avoid mere mechanical movements. All exercises should require thought, as in skilled handicraft such as slojd, carpentering, turning, painting, drawing, etc., which are preferable to the monotonous work of minding a machine, or filling boxes, or folding circulars. Not only does exercise develop the brain, but it produces true beauty of form. A perfect hand and wrist can only be developed by muscular exercise. The sculptor would never care to take for models women who sit in their boudoir or carriage all day, or men who spend their lives in counting-houses or armchairs.

Exercise, moreover, strengthens all the organs, and particularly the heart and blood-vessels—a matter of the first importance.

All forms of exercise are good for men, and most for women. For girls, however, we may single out sculling as being perhaps the best form, and tricycling, and particularly bicycling, as perhaps the worst. The praises of tennis have long been sung, and are well deserved.

Perhaps the most common deformity in growing girls is in the spine, which frequently deviates from the straight line in a lateral curve to one side or the other. The spine has no natural curve from side to side, but has a double curve from before backwards that makes it into a sort of spring, which is still further increased by elastic pads of cartilage interposed between each pair of vertebræ. This is to prevent shocks travelling up to the brain. For the same reason we have a beautiful arch to the foot.

After twenty-five years the spine gets consolidated into twenty-six pieces or vertebræ, but before then there are some 200 separate bits in it, to support which over 100 muscles surround it and keep it erect. Now, it is evident that if the growth and development of these muscles are interfered with by want of exercise, artificial pressure from rigid corsets, insufficient food, or by any other means, they will fail in their task of keeping the spine erect, and then the one-sided attitude assumed by girls when writing, or riding, or lounging about does the rest, and the curve soon becomes fixed. Therefore, let every mother go in for prevention rather than cure. Let her girl wear fine woollen combination garments next the skin, with a sailor dress over, as long as she can, and allow nothing rigid in the shape of steel or bone to confine the action of the muscles of the spine. Let her have plenty of games and outdoor exercise, and if her mother would like her girl to have a very fine and distinguished carriage, let her be taught to carry about the room a small pail (as used on the sands) full of water on the top of her head, and never let the girl cross her legs, lounge about, study on her elbows, or rest too much on one side only.

Should, however, the spine have become curved, the rational cure is not by still further weakening the muscles by making the girl recline for hours on a back-board, but by a regulated course of gymnastics to restore their action and so pull the spine straight. This cannot be done save under skilled medical advice.

So much then for the body, and now a word about the mind of the rising generation. We must ever remember that not only is the body one, though consisting of many members, but that the child is one, though divisible into at least a trinity of parts. Body and brain are, as we have seen, linked in every action, and the mind cannot express itself perfectly unless both are in good order. A stunted growth has often a special relation to bad morals in more ways than one.

Now, no education is worthy of the name that does not provide for body, mind, and spirit abundant suitable food and sufficient exercise. Food to make us grow, and exercise to assimilate it, are needed in all parts of our being.

Again, all education must be based on a clear conception of the force of heredity and the fact that a child is but an epitome of the characteristics of its ancestry. Heredity is a power in body, mind, and spirit, and produces strong traits and tendencies in all these.

This fact being granted, it clearly shows us one thing, and that is, that a child is far from being virgin soil. Its little mind is strongly biassed in many directions, its passions are already indicating its parentage, and the lines of its character are already to a certain extent laid down. A wise parent's wish, then, is so to mould this character, so to check the tendencies for evil and foster those for good, that the outcome shall be a distinct advance on previous generations. Cultivating, therefore, is even a more important part of education than sowing.

Premature development should always be checked, and show-children discouraged. All training should be for the future, and childhood should be prolonged as much as possible. The best schools for this sort of education are home and country. That which is commonly called education is in reality the least part of it.

Nothing can take the place of a wise parent's guidance and counsel, and it is still true—and long, long may it remain so—that any distinction which the men of our race may have attained on the world's stage, any nobility they may have shown, any fame they may have achieved, has been due principally and fundamentally to the mothers of Old England.

Finally let us endeavour, in teaching our children the higher mysteries of faith and religion, ever to be sure that what we teach is truth—the pure, unadulterated truth of God. Let the stories and characters in the Bible be first spoken of and taught, and give the doctrines in early life a secondary place to the practice, that the children may not only be clever in head, but tender in heart and unselfish in word and thought; and let us remember in all our training the three great maxims given us in Scripture —offend not, hinder not, despise not one of these little ones.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

In a Ceylon Plantation.

A CHAT ABOUT COCOA.

"Cocoa-leaf, cocoa-nut, cocoa," remarks a technical authority—"it requires thought before one can rightly attribute the properties and uses of these vegetable products." Many persons think cocoa-nibs are made from a root, others associate them with the cocoa-nut palm. As a matter of fact, cocoa is the product of the seeds of the *Theobroma* (food of the gods) *cacao*. The tree flourishes in Mexico, Brazil, the West India Islands, Columbia and Equador. The finest qualities are grown in the island of Trinidad, and in Venezuela. Caracas has given its name to a popular brand. Of late years Ceylon has also produced a bean of high character. A drawing made in a leafy corner of that sunny island supplies us with our first illustration.

The fruit of the cocoa tree is a large pod that hangs by a tough timber stalk. The pods do not ripen all at the same time, and there is therefore no particular harvest season. One or two of the pods from a tree are cut as they appear to the eye of the expert to be ready for stripping. These are gathered together in heaps, and by-and-by the plantation hands, men and women, break open the pods and extract the nuts, each pod containing a hundred or more. The nuts are then laid out upon mats to dry, after which they are packed for exportation in bags, each of which holds about 112 lbs.

Recently, in company with a friend (says a writer in the *English Illustrated*), I visited "the cocoa metropolis" of the West of England, and watched the gradual conversion of the luscious-looking beans into that particular "food of the gods" which has become universal among men. Bags from Trinidad, Venezuela, Ceylon, and other cocoa regions were being swung through the air into the storage and grinding rooms of Fry's factories at Bristol.

We paused at the open door of the roasting room, where the contents of these bags are emptied into several "roasters," cylindrical pans, slowly revolving over open coke fires. The beans are stirred now and then by experienced attendants, who can tell when the roasting is complete by the aroma of the vapour that arises from them. This first process is the most important of the series of treatments which the cocoa-bean undergoes before it is ready for the breakfast or dessert table. A bad roast is fatal—the bean is destroyed. But a bad roast is a very exceptional incident. From the roasters the beans are conveyed to large hoppers connected with the floors beneath by shoots that transfer the roasted beans to the winnowing room. Here a machine cracks the nuts, removing their hard outer skin or shell, and both are together hauled to a point over the winnower where the blowers separate the husks from the nuts, and the latter now being thoroughly cleaned from all *débris* of the shell, become what are known as cocoa-nibs, which are now ready for grinding.

From the grinding room we come to the sugar-grinding room, which is incidental, as it were, to the next operation, which belongs both to the manufacture of chocolate and the

A Pugmill, or Mixing Pan.

A Corner of the Roasting Room.

ordinary cocoa. A vast quantity of loaf sugar is here ground and sifted until it is as fine as the finest flour, and as soft and silky to the touch. Close by this little world of "sweetness and white" is the pan or pugmill room, where the cocoa-nibs, in great revolving pans, are mixed with a fine dressed sugar, and pounded between granite rollers into paste. No water is used, but the material is kept warm. There is a large percentage of oil in cocoa-nibs, and encouraged by a gentle heat, it is brought forth, and thus the nut or bean becomes liquefied. Sugar is added until the cocoa is of the consistency of dough. From the pugmill this cocoa-dough goes into batteries of rollers, where it is conducted over granite cylinders, flattened out, and rolled by a series of ingenious machines invented and made in Paris, and comes out chocolate, except that it has to cool. This hardens the oil of the nib, called "cocoa butter," and the chocolate is then ready to be prepared for use.

Skipping the floor we have just described, a certain proportion of the ground nibs comes to the department to which we next descend, falling into hoppers that make the powder finer and finer. On this floor of hoppers, into which the ground nibs are deposited to make concentrated cocoa, the sense is bewildered, the mind fascinated by an incessant repetition of wheels. To the turn of a bewildering maze of whirling machinery, the mills perform their eccentric motions until the cocoa is sufficiently ground. It is then collected and placed in canvas bags, which are packed into the receivers of a long array of hydraulic presses, that also constitute a very interesting scene. The canvas bags subjected to hydraulic pressure give forth most of the oil which the cocoa contains. It runs off into tin pans and leaves behind the dry pure cocoa of commerce. The oil is of a dark brown colour, but as it cools it gradually becomes white and in solid blocks, and is thenceforward known as cocoa butter.

We have not thought it necessary to mention the separate treatment of different varieties of bean, Trinidad, Caracas, Ceylon and others. The process does not vary. In quitting the roasting, grinding, winnowing, milling, pressing, and other operations, we leave behind us the men's work. Not that the master hands do not appear in the lighter sections of the factories, but girls and women predominate in the latter departments, which belong to the production of chocolate creams and fancy confections. On our way to the ground floor we come upon one of the rooms set apart for the filling of cocoa tins and packets. Here crowds of girls are weighing and packing the brown powder. They are a healthy, well-dressed company of young women, and of a more than ordinary look of intelligence. The ground floor of the factory is devoted to many varied purposes. First, we come upon the busy scene of sugar boiling—long rows of boilers, long rows of men in white French caps and aprons. From the boilers the sugar is emptied upon great stone slabs, where a little army of more white-capped labourers stir and beat up the cream-like compound with white wooden spades. Thus prepared it is transferred to the moulds; and this brings us to another department, that repeats the atmosphere of the sugar mill. Moulds for iron castings, as you are aware, are made of sand. The creamy sugar which we have seen boiled and manipulated for the next process is poured into moulds made of starch. We find ourselves in the midst of stacks upon stacks of these square moulds, flanked by bench after bench of men, and by moulders. On one side the sugar cream is poured into the moulds from handy funnels; on the other, when solidified, the resultant creams are collected for ultimate coating with chocolate. Leaving the moulding rooms, we wander in and out of various other departments, where thousands of busy fingers are giving the finishing touches to fancy forms of creams and plain chocolates, that will ultimately appear in all kinds of boxes, from the cheap popular little *bondon* boxes to the handsome and artistically arranged and decorated cabinet of mixed sweets, fit for the notice of a princess.

Incidentally we may mention that we noted with pleasure evidences of the care both physical and moral which Messrs. Fry take of their workpeople. We passed

"Packing the brown powder."

through various meal-rooms, and were informed that the firm provide their employees with means for cooking their food in the factories There are schoolrooms, too, and a large lecture hall where, every morning at a quarter to nine, one of the principals attends and reads a chapter of the Bible to the assembled workpeople ; a hymn is also read. Sick clubs and other useful organisations flourish, and employers and employed are evidently on the best and most friendly terms.

And now, once more in the fresh air, we make the acquaintance of the engines and boilers, all on the most perfect scale, even to the oldest mechanical servant of the firm, a great old beam engine of the melancholy, mad-elephant kind described by Dickens. It has been in use over fifty years, and on its present site was erected the first engine that Boulton and Watt introduced to Bristol. The old-fashioned but strong engine has been supplemented by many others. It takes eight powerful sets to drive the works in these days. They would be a surprise to the writer of a paragraph in the *Bury and Norwich Post* of June 6, 1798, could he come back to earth again.

"Since the great improvement of the steam-engine," he wrote on that particular date, "it is astonishing to what a variety of manufactures this useful machine has been applied. We are credibly informed that Mr. Fry, of Bristol, has in his new manufactory one of these engines (improved by Mr. Jones, an ingenious millwright of that city) for the *sole purpose* of manufacturing chocolate and cocoa. Either the consumption of this little article must far exceed our ideas, or, which we think much more likely, a very large proportion of what is drunk in this kingdom must be made by him." This is the very thought that occurs to us after walking for hours over only one of the four main factories that rise aloft, tier upon tier, with their tall smokestacks, giving employment to more than two thousand people. Fry's had been established some half a century when the Norwich paragraphist quipped about the "little article" of cocoa, and yet with four factories *en bloc*, and several outsiders, there is still room for competition in the supply of the people of the United Kingdom.

It may be added that Messrs. J. S. Fry and Sons have won high honours at the leading international exhibitions for the excellence of their productions, and have been favoured with the direct commands of Royalty.

MARRIED, NOT MATED: THE STORY OF ABIGAIL.

BY MRS. SKINNER.

THE name of Abigail's husband was Nabal, meaning *senseless*. Her name meant "one who is the cause of joy." How these two came to get married we cannot tell, but they are certainly not the only ill-mated pair we have known. When once the knot is tied, whether mated or not, the only thing to do is to make the very best we can of the bargain. It is not always that in an ill-mated pair the woman gets the worse part ; sometimes it is the man who is the joy of all, and the woman who is senseless. But whether joy-makers or misery-makers, the lesson of *Abigail's seven P's* is sure to fit in to some corner of our home-life. (1 Samuel xxv.)

Peacemaker. Her husband was a farmer with large flocks of sheep, and there came into his fields a company of soldiers, who, while waiting for orders, assisted his servants ; as one of them said in expressive language, "They were a wall unto us." Shearing time came—the time of merriment and hospitality ; the chief of the band of soldiers sent to Nabal, asking in return for his service a gift of food for his men. Had he been less honourable he would have taken the food by force. The farmer answered, "No," in a very rude, boorish way ; the chief receiving the insolent message, grew very angry, and determined to fight the matter out.

A discreet servant, who knew when it was right to be a talebearer, hurried off to Abigail, busy in her dairy and home, and told just how matters stood. Then it was she became the *peacemaker* between her husband and the chief, and thus bloodshed was averted. She might have said, "Well, it will serve Nabal right, and I hope it will teach him to keep a civil tongue in his head." It was in her power to make matters even worse than they were, by encouraging her husband in his meanness. But she chose rather to "follow peace." How often in every home comes the possibility of discord, if nothing worse! How often the husband or children come home tired, sometimes full of a grievance about somebody! Then is the mother's opportunity to become a peacemaker. It is an old saying, that it takes two to make a quarrel, but it often only takes one to end a quarrel. "First keep thyself in peace, and then shalt thou be able to make peace amongst others," says Thomas à Kempis. The words, "Thou wilt keep him," or her, "in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee," shows us how we can get that personal peace. Abigail's second "P" stands for—

Promptness. What she did was done quickly. None of the proverbial grass grew under her feet. "Made haste" —a woman who did things to time. Some would have said, "I must consider what I had better do," and after considering, would have dawdled about, doing up their back hair, or stopping to scold the maid, or the children. Never prompt! never in time! There are some weaknesses peculiar to men, and some peculiar to women, and we must confess that a lack of promptness and punctuality is one of our faults. For proof of this, see how often meetings for women only begin many minutes after the advertised time ; the number of trains we fail to catch, and the lack of system in our house-work. Sometimes we try to excuse ourselves by saying, "It's my nature." Such an excuse we should not tolerate from our children, neither should we from ourselves. There are three things we ought to possess to help us to overcome that weakness—1. A good watch worn in a pocket easily accessible. 2. A written list of each day's duties, or a mental list if we are blessed with good memories. 3. A determination to be prompt and punctual.

Philanthropic. Some women would have said, "I'll see that those soldiers have none of our food! I'll try to make peace, but it must not cost me anything." Not so Abigail ; she was too kind-hearted. Nor did she say, "How little can I give them?" Just read the list of things she sent—bread, meat, wine, parched corn, clusters of raisins, and

cakes of figs—enough to raise the wish that we might have joined that great picnic on the slopes of Carmel! Few of us are farmers' wives with large stores of provisions, but to each one of us is given the power and opportunity of doing some deed of kindness nearly every waking hour of our lives. Kindness is love in action. Often we are tempted to refrain our hands and words because the opportunity is so small: we might send a bunch of red berries out of our garden to a dull sick-room, or buy a penny book at the door, or leave our own concerns to enter into the small details of somebody's troubles. We forget that the most fragrant things in life are enclosed in the smallest packages.

Patience. Abigail wanted very much to tell her husband what she thought of him and what she herself had done. This was quite right, but instead of bursting out with it as soon as she arrived home, she waited till the next morning, knowing he would then be in a better frame of mind. Patience is often confounded with fortitude, resignation and submission; but it is in brief, the power of holding ourselves under control, and that calmly. It is a virtue we claim to have in greater degree than our brothers, but we need far more of it than we possess at present. To restrain the cross word, not to be fretted by small cares, to calmly endure disappointment—these are hard things to do, but it is patience that wins us the victory. We know how sweet is the perfume of lavender in our stores of linen; patience is the lavender of home and life.

Politic. As we say, she had her head screwed on in the right way. She had got wits and used them—"a woman of good understanding." Finding herself between two opposing powers, all at once placed in a very difficult position, she at once forms her plan of action. The presents are first decided on; the second part of her plan is the sending of the presents on first. Her salutation, lighting off her ass and bowing herself; her frank admission of her husband's character, and the genuine tone of her compliments, prove that she was no brainless woman that just went blindly to work. God has given us each one clever brains, if only we used them more. Our daily tasks would not be so monotonous, nor our expenditure of labour so uneconomic, if we were more politic. No woman would allow herself to be so engrossed with her home-work as to permit no time for newspaper reading or mental training, if she were at all ambitious of taking her proper place in the world. How is it that so many of us when placed in a position calling for mental decision, have to say, "I'll see what my husband says"? Is it not because our training has been deficient? Mutual counsel is all very well, but it should never be the excuse for mental inertness.

Pleasant. This is shown—in her description, "A woman of a beautiful countenance;" in her name, "A maker of joy;" in her servant's faithfulness to her, and in her mode of speech. She knew the power there is in a smile and a pleasant manner. "Always treat your husband with a smile," was the advice of a minister once to a poor woman burdened with a Nabal husband. A few months afterwards she returned, saying that her husband was cured. The smiles had done it. We would all like to have "beautiful faces," good husbands, and happy homes. Try what real, honest smiles will do.

Pious. After all, the very best thing about Abigail was that God was in her thoughts. We may try to get her first six P's, but if we do not gain the seventh, we shall not succeed with the others very well. It will be like buying the furniture to make a home with before we have taken the house. Abigail was not ashamed of her piety. Boldly she proclaimed the Lord's guidance, blessing, and protection. Is our piety of the intensely private sort that our children even hardly know if we are Christians? Abigail's piety was a hopeful, happy sort. A man said a little while ago, "My wife has been a professor of religion for years, but I knew she did not enjoy religion, and I said if that was all there was in it, I did not want it. But for the last few days she has acted and looked in such an elevated and glorious spirit that I cannot stand it, away from God. I want the same religion that inspires her."

Abigail, with her loves and troubles, has long since passed away; but the same spirit which influenced her dwells in the breast of many a one who is

MARRIED BUT NOT MATED.

"KISSED HIS MOTHER."

She sat in the porch in the sunshine
  As I went down the street—
A woman whose hair was silver,
  But whose face was blossom sweet,
Making me think of a garden,
  When, in spite of the frost and snow
Of bleak November weather,
  Late, fragrant lilies blow.

I heard a step behind me,
  And the sound of a merry laugh,
And I knew the heart it came from
  Would be like a comforting staff
In the time and the hour of trouble—
  Hopeful, and brave, and strong,
One of the hearts to lean on,
  When we think all things go wrong.

I turned at the click of the gate-latch,
  And met his manly look;
A face like his gives pleasure,
  As the page of a pleasant book.
It told of a steadfast purpose,
  Of a brave and daring will;
A face with a promise in it,
  That, God grant, the years fulfil.

He went up the pathway, singing;
  I saw the woman's eyes
Grow bright with a wordless welcome,
  As sunshine warms the skies.
"Back again, sweet-heart mother,"
  He cried, and bent to kiss
The loving face that was lifted
  For what some mothers miss.

That boy will do to depend on.
  I hold that this is true—
From lads in love with their mothers,
  Our bravest heroes grew.
Earth's grandest hearts have been loving hearts
  Since time and earth began;
And the boy who kissed his mother,
  Is every inch a man!

RODERIC'S REARING.

BY ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

A LITTLE group sat in the drawing-room of a hydropathic establishment in the most picturesque part of the Midlands. A grand landscape, over which the sun had just set, stretched before the wide windows, and within, the late autumn day was made cheery by a genial fire on the hearth, and by clustering chrysanthemums in pots, their rich colours gorgeous in the dying sunset light.

The human element in the bright picture was of the varied quality to be expected in such a place. There were faces bright with that keen intelligence which is born of wide culture and deep experience, and other countenances closed and narrow with prejudice and self-satisfaction. There were self-made folk bustling and prosperous, and "new" in every detail; and there were fading aristocrats whose antique jewels and real lace set off their worn brocades or carefully-preserved velvets. The women were in the majority, and they included among them old and young, widows, wives, and spinsters. There was only one child present, a boy of about ten, richly and showily dressed, and somewhat riotous in demeanour. Children were not generally admitted to the drawing-room of the establishment, but he was the only one at present in the house, so a point had been stretched in his favour. Of this concession, he had not shown himself worthy. He had behaved in a noisy, restless manner, calculated to disturb those half-invalided guests who were inclined for quietness. When one old lady had sought to occupy him in threading her needles, he had rudely repudiated the very idea, and though he had sullenly consented to hold some wool for another lady to wind, he had presently given it elfish jerks and twists which threw it all into a hopeless tangle. He had only grimaced and mocked at the mischief he had done, while his mother smiled so indulgently that the lady with the wool rose and left the room, perhaps as much to restrain her anger as to unravel her spoilt skein.

"Boys will be boys," said the mother; "darling Roderic is such a manly little fellow. You cannot expect a spirited lad to care to occupy himself as a girl might do."

A gentleman spoke from a sofa in a shady corner. "I wonder such a spirited lad cares to come into the drawing-room on mere sufferance."

The irony was thrown away on Roderic's mamma. "It is trying for him," she admitted, readily.

"And just a little trying for us, too," said one lady, with snow-white hair; while her sister tried to soften any asperity in the remark by adding, "Some of us are invalids, you see."

Roderic's mother, Mrs. Crofton, remarked at large that she could not understand any true woman objecting to the delightful mischievousness of a dear child, and as for its annoying sick people, it ought to cheer them up, and do them good.

She went on to say that she and her husband were giving very much attention to the upbringing of Roderic. They were determined that he should have every advantage. Hitherto, his lessons had been so managed as to be "like play" to him. They had a gymnasium fitted up for him at home, and her husband had grudged no expense to get him working models of steamboats and railways for toys.

"It is not every parent who can afford these things," observed one lady, rather drily.

"Fortunately not," said the gentleman seated in the shady corner.

"Fortunately?" cried Mrs. Crofton. She could not believe her ears. "Why," she said, "my husband says he don't know what he might have done if he had had such privileges, considering how well he has managed to get on, having to find out everything for himself!"

"I sewed it on myself."

"Probably with these privileges, he would not have done so well," answered the gentleman, leaving the sofa, and standing in the midst of the little party. "In my opinion, the first and best lesson any child can learn is that there are some things which must be done, though their doing is not pleasant till it is accomplished. And according to my experience, a child's character and talents are best developed by the makeshifts and ingenuities he has to exercise to carry out his little purposes. My father always said that the best part of play was in making one's own playthings!"

"Ah, well! there's much truth in that—for poor children," said Mrs. Crofton. "It is well for their sakes that it is so. But for those who are blessed with ample means it would be as absurd to make them undergo these privations and probations as it would be to compel them to make their own clothes, cook their own dinners, and wait upon themselves. For girls, to be sure, a little needlework and cooking is all very well whatever their position in life, because it helps them to keep their servants up to the mark."

"Why not good for boys, too?" asked the gentleman. "Don't you think we have gone on too long making these hard and fast divisions of labour between the sexes? Don't you think it might be more happy and wholesome for the world if there was less talk about 'man's work' and 'woman's work,' and more thought about earnestly and honestly fitting ourselves to do any duty that may come before us?"

"But there are men's duties and women's duties, surely?" observed a gentle-looking woman, a Miss Todd, who had not spoken before.

"Certainly, madam," answered the gentleman. "There are duties which no man would do while in the presence of women able and willing to discharge them; and the same with women, on the other hand. But my argument holds all the same. Men and women alike should so strive to discipline and train themselves that there shall be few duties indeed which they must let go undone, for lack of help from the sex whose duties they generally are." With a sudden change of voice and a significant glance towards Miss Todd, he added, "Now, road making or mending is, I presume, essentially a masculine employment."

"I should think so indeed," laughed all the ladies, except Miss Todd, whose sweet face flushed as she bent over her work.

"I grant it," pursued the gentleman. "Yet only this morning, when I was far up on the hill-side, I saw in the valley below a lady mending the road. She had come across an ugly hole, which might have tripped up a horse on a dark night, and caused ever so much overthrow and disaster. And there she was, picking up stones and filling up the gap. I could not get down in time to help her. But nothing she could have done would have seemed to me more truly womanly; just as for myself I don't think I ever did anything more manly than when I found a coat button loose, just as I was starting for a dinner party, and sewed it on myself, sooner than waken my old housekeeper, who was indulging in a nap, after a sleepless night with a sick neighbour."

He resumed presently, "One of the wisest women I ever knew brought up her boys to be able to make a bed comfortably, to tidy a room, sew on buttons, darn a sock, and put on a decent patch."

"Dear me," sneered Mrs. Crofton, "what mollycoddles they must have been! I think such mothers are disloyal to their sex. They seem to wish to make wives unnecessary. Not, of course, that gentlemen expect their wives to do such things for them with their own hands. But I presume this woman belonged to the working classes."

"Yes, I think she did," returned the gentleman, in his matter-of-fact voice, "for I believe her wisdom was born of the experience of her husband, who was a famous Arctic explorer, and her brother, who was one of the pioneer settlers in the great North-West, where he holds vast estates. One of her sons is now a distinguished general, and the other is doing very fairly as a geologist and traveller. Yes, they certainly belong to the working classes. As for this mother wishing to make wives unnecessary, I think the time will come when a man will be as ashamed to marry a woman merely to secure a well-cooked dinner or a whole sock, as women should be to marry men simply to be maintained. Such self-interestedness often fails of its end, as it leads to interested false pretences on the other side; whereas marriage on the basis of a good and dutiful record in the past, secures everything desirable under every conceivable contingency."

Mrs. Crofton laughed derisively. "The people you speak of did not belong to the working classes as I mean them," she said. "It is not bed-making and darning which put one into positions such as you say they got, but rather family or social influence. That's what my husband says, and we are quite determined by-and-by to place Roderic in some school where his companions will be of the very best class. That means so much in after life. It makes all the difference to a man if his schoolmates are cabinet ministers and landed proprietors, or mere farmers and country doctors."

"I rather think," said the gentleman, "that if the whole truth of many lives could be known, we should find that success is often achieved by the help of hands which we should be inclined beforehand to regard as feeble and unlikely. I know a distinguished author who got an opportunity to address a specially large and important section of the public, because a certain poor old blind woman, who had liked him as a boy and had admired some of his early efforts, constantly brought his name before her son, until that son finally brought it before his superiors, who

"A railway carriage conversation with an old French lady."

conferred on him this valuable opportunity of service. One of the sons of the lady I spoke of before—he who is the geologist and traveller—was led to the district where he made the discoveries on which his reputation is founded, through information received in a railway carriage conversation with an old French lady, to whom he had paid some attention by rescuing her bird's cage from the tender mercies of railway porters, and afterwards showing some interest in her discourse concerning its habits and health, which gradually led on to subjects of vital importance to one of his turn of mind."

"Well," said Mrs. Crofton, "I am sure darling Roderic is so engaging that he is sure to be a favourite with everybody who really knows him, and he is far too gentlemanly not to like to be obliging; a high-spirited lad naturally shrinks from certain occupations, because they seem to him to compromise his new dignity, but let Roderic have an opportunity to show his mettle, and I know he will do it."

"Undoubtedly," answered the gentleman, in that same even tone of his. He turned towards the window; the sun had quite gone down, and shadows were swiftly flying from the great hills which enclosed the scene. Below, the avenue lay in sombre gloom—a straight avenue between great trees, tossing their bare boughs in the rising wind—not a long avenue, for one could distinctly see the light in the lodge window at the end, gleaming like a star fallen to earth.

"I think there is a letter for me lying in the lodge," said the gentleman. "I don't suppose it will be sent up till the evening mail comes in. I wonder if Master Roderic will do me the favour of running down for it; he can easily go to and fro before teatime?"

Mrs. Crofton turned to her son, an expression of mingled appeal and despair suddenly subduing the self-complacency of her countenance.

"Now, Rody, love," she began, with a forced vivacity. But the boy interrupted her—

"I shan't go, ma, it's all dark and nasty."

She professed not to understand him, saying—

"Oh, Rody, dear, the road is quite dry, it will not soil your shoes!"

"It's not that," said Rody, shamelessly. "I'm frightened! I can't see what's there. I don't like the dark."

He saw his mother's face darken, and caught at her dress, half crying, "You know I'm frightened of the dark; you always said it showed how much imagination I had."

Mrs. Crofton's self-control broke down. "You little simpleton!" she cried, shaking him off. "You ought to be ashamed not to do such a thing, whether you are frightened or not."

"I will fetch the letter myself," said the gentleman, quietly, and Roderic slunk out of the room sobbing.

When they had both departed, there was a brief silence among the ladies. Mrs. Crofton sat still, with flushed face. Suddenly she asked, testily—

"Does anybody know who that man is?"

The invalid from the sofa replied—

"I thought we all knew. That is Vincent Caroll, the great geologist and traveller. It was his own mother he was speaking of, and he gave us a scrap of his autobiography."

"He is taking Roderic with him down the avenue," said Miss Todd, peering out into the darkness.

Mrs. Crofton fell a-musing.

AMATEUR BAKERY.

By the Author of "We Wives," etc.

WE live in the country, four miles from a town. Consequently, carts and vans from shopkeepers in the city often call up at our porch-covered door. The baker especially is due every other day with what *he* calls "fresh bread." Those loaves are always baked at four o'clock in the morning, and, after a long round under the sun or through keen east wind, arrive at four p.m. in *anything* but a fresh state.

"Is this the very newest you can give us?" I inquired, time after time, as the hard-looking "squares" were handed out to me.

"Quite the freshest, ma'am," was the answer.

"Have you no *fancy* bread?" was often my next query. "We get so tired of this uninteresting household loaf."

"All the fancy was sold long ago," was the invariably grim reply, touched, I often thought, with a tinge of malice—we were so much in his hands. "Can't do better for you than this."

In vain we changed our baker. There seemed a combination against letting the rectory have anything but second-rate, stale bread.

At length my family flatly rebelled. They would not, and they could not eat it. Then a happy thought struck me. Why not make my own bread? Easier said than done. I looked through various cookery books; the recipes all sounded too complicated. People I consulted said it was a most difficult thing to do properly.

So much depended upon the yeast, the flour, the oven, the cook, the weather. So many "ifs" were quite disheartening; but my family at present subsist *entirely* on home-made bread, so I did not find the difficulties insuperable. As many other housewives may wish to reduce their baker's bill by *one-half*, I write down just my *modus operandi*.

I always use German yeast. It is sent by post. For fivepence, enough queer-looking, queer-smelling, sticky, crisp, duckety-dun-coloured stuff comes (two ounces) to make one stone of flour into bread. N.B.—Unless it crumbles easily the yeast is not fresh.

This is melted in four quarts of lukewarm water. Fourteen pounds of flour are mixed with a good handful of *salt* and another good handful of *sugar*. The warm yeast mixture is poured into the centre, and stirred up with a long-handled wooden spoon. When sticky, I valiantly plunge my arms into the mass, and work in every bit of flour in the crock. The pan should be quite clean at the sides and bottom when this is done properly. I then work it thoroughly for about fifteen minutes, until the dough feels elastic and air bubbles appear.

It is then covered with a clean cloth, and left in the kitchen all night. This saves a great deal of time that will be lost in waiting about if the plan recommended by many cookery books is followed.

Early the next morning, immediately after breakfast, behold! my "sponge" risen to the top of the huge crock in which it was left. A very few minutes are then spent dividing it for its several tins—some square, some round. Five more are allowed for it to rise again in front of the fire, and it is ready for baking.

Three-quarters of an hour usually does all the batch, and I wish I could show my readers the crisp brown loaves that come up to our store room twice a week. The tin loaf and cottage and twist (made by plaiting together three equal pieces of dough), the dinner rolls and barm bracks!

These latter are simply dough sweetened with more sugar and enriched with currants. A small piece of butter, creamed and warmed with a little new milk, is added, until the preparation is of the consistency of an ordinary cake mixture.

We also often have *milk rolls* for tea. Take one pound of flour, add to it half a teaspoonful of cream of tartar and half a teaspoonful of baking soda, mix with milk, divide into ten pieces, and bake. Or one pound of flour, one teaspoonful of baking powder, and one egg beaten up in a cupful of milk. Don't knead much, but shape into a long roll, and cut into twelve pieces. This makes *French rolls*.

Buns are simply barm brack mixture, as above, with the addition of candied peel. Brush over with milk or white of egg.

Scones.—One pound of flour, one tablespoonful of sugar, one teaspoonful of carbonate of soda or cream of tartar; enough buttermilk to mix into a stiff dough. Shape into triangles, prick with a fork, and bake.

Soda Bread.—Two pounds of flour, or wheat-meal if you want brown bread, a little salt, a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda, and buttermilk. Work all well together until a good stiff dough is under your hands. Shape a round, and put it into the oven on an iron plate, or over the fire on a pan. This is a bread much appreciated in Ireland, and is generally eaten piping hot with lots of butter.

With all this variety I find our baker's bill is reduced by one-half. The baker is offended, and calls no more up at the rectory porch.

But he laughs who wins, and as we eat our rolls, our bracks, our buns, our fresh loaves, we recall with present congratulations the past period of bakers' carts and stale bread!

THE BOY'S ROOM

THE boy's room is too frequently the one which is kept bare of decoration and beauty. We think this is a mistake. Boys appreciate fine distinctions, and if the amenities of life are left out in dealing with them they may grow to be fine, manly, sturdy fellows, but gentlemanly boys—never. But a boy who has a room which has been specially prepared for him, and whose tastes have been consulted in the decoration and furnishing of it, learns to take pride in it. He feels that it is his sanctum. Here he gathers together the treasures most dear to his boyish heart, and in the accumulation of them his nature finds free play.

It is an interesting thing to visit a boy's room, or perhaps we should say boys' rooms. For different members of the sex vary greatly in their tastes and habits. If it is ever your fortune to go through the dormitories of a large boys' boarding-school, or those of a college, you will readily understand this. Every room indicates the special taste of its occupier.

There is the room of the neat boy, whose effects are arranged with precision; there is the room of the careless boy—a veritable liberty hall. There is the room of the young "swell," whose arrangement of neckties around his looking-glass alone would proclaim his natural bent. Then the occupant of this one has fine artistic tastes; the dweller in that one is very fond of dogs; while across the hall is the sanctum of the boy who is very partial to games. There is no end to the variety of the genus boy. And it is a wise mother who studies her boy's taste and furnishes his room accordingly.

The idea that anything is good enough for a boy should never be entertained for a moment. Anything is *not* good enough for a boy. To be trained in refined habits, boys need refining influences. And a mother can do much towards moulding the bent of her young son's mind by suitably furnishing and decorating his room. A shelf for books with his pet volumes upon it, a few good pictures, and such appliances for physical comfort and cleanliness as are necessary, ought to be in the room of every boy.

A shelf over the washstand on which are placed a small bottle of ammonia, some pumice-stone, and a nailbrush, will aid a boy in keeping his hands in presentable condition. Many little habits of cleanliness have doubtless been acquired in the nursery before a boy is old enough to aspire to the dignity of a room. Yet it can hardly be expected that these neat ways will be kept up for any length of time by boys unless their surroundings are favourable.

A boy usually takes much pride in a nice room. He enjoys cleanliness and order, and is not one whit behind his sister in the appreciation of artistic surroundings. By all means, then, let him have them, and encourage his taste for them.

Nor, finally, should the boy's moral and spiritual needs be forgotten. Whether his disposition be serious or wayward, let him always find a copy of the Bible reposing on its dainty mat on his table near at hand. If it be the gift of his loved mother, with an inscription in her handwriting, it will be cherished all the more. Should that same hand have set itself the task of marking out suitable passages therein, they will certainly be read at some time or other, if not daily, and the blessing that may follow will repay all the thoughtful care bestowed. How many a man has looked back to bless such a simple expression of maternal love!

A MOTHER'S NOTES ON DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

Now that the winter has fairly set in, our one idea of clothing has regard to warm texture and cosy fit.

For dresses, tweeds, cloths, and serges seem to predominate for more useful wear, while there is a very handsome material with a slightly-raised surface, embroidered with coloured silk in a small pattern, which alone, or mixed with a plain stuff of the same shade, will make a beautiful best dress. Serges, too, are now made in a coarse diagonal pattern, which is a change, and an improvement on the fine twill estamene serge; but in making it up be careful to take good turnings, as it is very apt to fray out. We saw a dress made in this stuff which very much took our fancy. It had an Eton jacket; the vest was made of silk of the same colour; and the plain skirt had a pleating about three inches wide at the extreme edge.

Fig. 1.

How we mothers are troubled sometimes about the large holes that will appear in the children's stocking knees! Those in the feet are bad enough, but those in the knees are worse, for they show more, and are generally larger. Even the neatest darn here seems to give the stocking a shabby appearance. It is a good plan to keep the last new pair of stockings for Sundays and special occasions, and pass them on for every-day use when the knees get worn through. We lately saw a pair of ingeniously made knee-caps for a child to wear when at play, or at home. They were made of leather, and fastened on with straps and buckles. This gives us the idea that these very useful articles might be made at home with a piece of cloth such as most of us have in store. The cap is round, from four to six inches in diameter, and is drawn to fit the knee by means of two pieces of elastic, sewn on each side, while another piece buttons on to the waistband or stays like a stocking suspender, only it goes from the front instead of the side.

Fig. 2.

While we are on the stocking subject, we would like to tell our readers of the mushroom stocking holder, which came to us from across the Border, and has proved an invaluable help in stocking mending. Any part of the stocking fits over it, and a much better darn can be made than when the stocking is stretched over the hand, and in less time. We do not know that this can be bought in England, but if our readers cannot get it elsewhere, we can supply it on receipt of six stamps. Address as for patterns, as directed below.

Fig. 1. Here we show a lady's half tight-fitting coat, made in beaver cloth, and trimmed with fur. The novel point in the jacket is the large revers, a style much in favour this winter. The same jacket is sometimes made with a pointed cuff, the point being downwards over the band.

We are somewhat surprised to hear that the Watteau and sacque jackets are to be leading shapes this season. Some of the Watteaus are so arranged that the pleat can be removed without in any way spoiling the jacket. Circular cloaks are still much in vogue, and we find that all the new wide shapes are very wide round the bottom.

There seems to be a tendency to adopt Russian costumes for the dresses, jackets, and blouses of both boys and girls. Fig. 2 shows one of these, suitable for a girl from eight to twelve years of age. The plain skirt is lined throughout, and set on to a body of lining which has a plastron of the same material and a band of the contrast. The long blouse is made of jersey material, and fastened invisibly on the cross under the trimming. The waist is drawn in with a belt of cord. This pattern will give some of our mothers an idea for renovating an old dress. The blouse, which need not be lined throughout, will take about one yard of double-width stuff, the skirt and sleeves about two yards.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 3 shows a child's pinafore. It consists of a yoke, below which straight widths of stuff are gathered and set on. At the neck two pieces of material are used like revers, and there is a sort of plastron of the darker material. A runner is made at the waist on the wrong side, and the waist itself is confined by a string run through this. There seems more need to entirely cover winter dresses than summer ones, as they cannot be so easily washed. This pattern will make a tasty pinafore, which will answer the purpose very well.

Fig. 4. Here we show a little girl's school dress made in serge. The body is lined to the waist, and the material is set on full below the pointed yoke. The dress is trimmed with a fancy braid, and the waist is finished with a waistband which is pointed at the ends and crossed, fastening with a button.

Flat patterns of Figs. 1, 2, 3, and 4 can be supplied at 6½d. each, post free. Address, "M. C. Pattern," 9, Paternoster Row, E.C.